

Water/Wastewater Commissioners'
Meeting Minutes
August 31, 2010

Present: Robert E. Courage, Chairman
Michael E. Putnam, Vice-Chairman
Dale A. White, Member
David Boucher
Evelyn Gendron

Call to Order:

Chairman Courage called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Decisions:

Approval of Final Minutes – Vice-Chairman Putnam made the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 17, 2010 as amended with one correction in the first paragraph. Commissioner White seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Floor Policy Proposal – Municipal Interest Proposal

Vice-Chairman Putnam explained the legislative proposal of LGC, acting as a lobbyist to oppose any change in current state statutes, which would eliminate or reduce the current obligation of public water entities whose land holdings are in another municipality from paying that municipality a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) that is equal to what the property taxes would be for that property. A copy of the hand-out Mr. Putnam provided following the Board of Selectmen's meeting was discussed at length, and is attached to these minutes as a permanent record. Upon discussion, Vice-Chairman made the motion to support LGC's/NHMA's efforts to keep the current state statutes as is with regard to the hand-out being distributed/discussed. Chairman Courage seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Superintendent Boucher will convey the Board's decision to Town Administrator Scaife.

Discussions:

Correspondence re: denial of final water bill reduction – Biker Chick Essentials – Superintendent Boucher explained that since it was determined during an investigation of the building's water meters with the business owners present that the meters were functioning properly, the final water bill has been paid in full. There is no longer a need for discussion on this topic, he said.

Curtis Well Power Supply Upgrade Proposal – Superintendent Boucher said that there is supporting data from Piquette and Howard Electrical Service stapled to the (August 29, 2010) Stantec Consultants hand-out titled "Curtis Well Power Supply Upgrade to Pumps" (attached to these meeting minutes as a permanent record) indicating recommended items and pricing for two potential courses of action to bring power over to Curtis Well #2: "buried" (with a total price of \$149,666.00) and "tri-plex/overhead" (with a total price of \$60,879.50). Upon review of the hand-outs, Commissioner White noted that the

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underground cable is far more expensive, which would make sense, he said. Vice-Chairman Putnam questioned what kind of electrical manhole structure is being proposed for \$2,000.00. Commissioner White explained the installation process involved, noting that the price is not unreasonable given that the structure itself may be priced at approximately \$1,100.00 and add to that the installation labor costs. Mr. Putnam asked how the pumps are running; Mr. Boucher said so far, they are running good, noting that there is still a stray voltage detected in the grounding wire. He said that he had asked Dave Howard today if he had any ideas as to the source of the stray voltage; Mr. Howard will investigate further and get back to Mr. Boucher. Commissioner White said he would like the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to consider that, if this were to come to fruition and because of the dollar value involved, it may be prudent to obtain other pricing. At the same time, he said, putting this work out to bid would bring additional engineering costs. Superintendent Boucher mentioned that the signal received from Pump #1 motor showed wear, suspected as wear of the insulation around the wiring, and may be an indication that the pump is "on its way out". Vice-Chairman Putnam said that his response to Commissioner White's question is that Howard & Piquette should be able to do the job with no further engineering needed, and that if the pumps hold up for another year or two, perhaps putting funds into the budget and/or capital equipment accounts would be reasonable. Mr. Boucher said that they have not received Three-C's report yet, but that their preliminary guess is that the voltage coming across the river would not cause additional harm, that the voltage signal was "clean" and "decent", indicating that the filter was working. He and Mr. Putnam agreed that the directional drill cost was a good price. Mr. Boucher said that the Maher Corporation hasn't responded to him yet as to the warranty issue or cause(s) for the motor burning out. Mr. Boucher explained a similar situation was experienced recently in Tilton, and that Tilton's wells were just redeveloped.

Vice-Chairman asked Superintendent Boucher whether he had bottom-line figures for the Curtis Well expenses to date. Superintendent Boucher said no. Mr. Putnam said we should get the Three-C report and to help determine whether the problem may have been with the original pump motor. Superintendent Boucher said all indications are that, more than likely, the grounding corrected the bad grounding coming across. Chairman Courage asked for the board members' recommendations for action. He has two questions: if the problem was in the pump station dry filters, which are supposed to take care of "dirty" VFD signals and/or spikes that Superintendent Boucher described may have occurred, then the responsibility for correction lies with the pump station, in that they should have been tested, perhaps even at start-up of the control panel, since he recalled the spikes being mentioned then. If the pump station dry filters are alright, he said, then the problem is on the other side of the river. It is his feeling that the electrician didn't give a sufficient response during the Board of Commissioners' previous meeting. Mr. Courage said that, to him, new technology is being matched with old technology, and that the electrician didn't investigate the operations closely enough. Now the costs are very high, since the proper actions weren't taken at the right times during the upgrade project. At the onset of this project, there was no mention of the dollar amount to be spent. In other words, he said, we wanted an upgrade but there was no mention of what was needed on the other side of the river. They were told to investigate it and to submit a proposal, which they did. So, the ball was dropped because the upgrade project wasn't investigated closely enough. Untold grief has been caused this summer, said Chairman Courage, and due to the tremendous purchase of water, noting that due to the lack of rain, Milford would have probably had to purchase more water than usual. Commissioner White asked what would be the proper avenue that should be taken now. Vice-Chairman Putnam asked whether the engineer should be held responsible for the water costs. Chairman Courage said the Board should have been given more than one project option. Commissioner White is bothered by seeing the photos

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indicating the condition of the underground vaults on the other side, i.e., loose wires, covers off, rusted parts, etc. Chairman Courage said that if you're about to undergo a facility upgrade, that more than one alternative should be presented. Superintendent Boucher said that determining the cause will be tough to do. Vice-Chairman said that placing blame isn't helpful; there must be a decision as to how to proceed, and how to respond to the proposal. He suggested looking at the budget and the costs incurred to date, and how much needs to be done sooner and how much later, and how much time can we take to save for the future costs. Chairman Courage said he has emails dating back to early August when the off-line troubles first began; he suggested assembling the costs to date and inviting the engineer to a discussion, including that Piquette and Howard were going to share motor failure costs last fall yet nothing more has been discussed about that. Chairman Courage and Vice-Chairman Putnam agreed that they are disappointed in the results and that the Board's frustration should be conveyed. Commissioner White agreed that all the figures should be compiled, including Stantec's costs and a meeting be scheduled. Chairman Courage reiterated that the Board is responsible for overseeing the success of the Milford Water Supply and that Milford is very lucky to have the inter-connection with Pennichuck, and perhaps more people in the community should understand the need for such an inter-connection and a back-up water supply to rely on.

Following discussion, it was determined that what is needed include obtaining the Three-C report and its close interpretation, project costs and 2011 budget process strategies, pursue a \$3,000.00 engineering cost concession, find out whether the shoreline protection permit update is needed, trenching with conduit—is that something that in-house personnel can do? Find out about the electrical manholes. Superintendent Boucher will bring costs to the next Commissioners' meeting, as well as financial reports for July and August, the Pennichuck invoices, and Piquette and Howard invoices. Pump motor costs and Maher Corporations prices to redevelop Well #1 would also be helpful. Superintendent Boucher said that he is expecting to receive a DVD in the mail from Maher Services regarding flows gained. He will get costs for redeveloping Pump #1. Vice-Chairman Putnam would like to see a pre-and post-redevelopment. Mr. Courage said that drastic cuts may be necessary in the 2011 budget. Mr. White said that the town shouldn't have to pay for one thing until a clear definition is obtained as to what happened and where we are headed.

Information Items:

Activities Report – The commissioners reviewed the information provided. Commissioner White was pleased to see that Chemserve made a special trip to verify bacteria levels.

Commissioner White asked Mr. Boucher to discuss at the next meeting the amount of remote database access utilized by the billing clerk.

Future Appointments/Meetings:

The next meeting of the Water and Wastewater Commissioners will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14, 2010 at the Water Utilities Department, 564 Nashua Street.

Adjournment:


A motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Chairman Putnam at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner White seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Evelyn B. Gendron


Robert E. Courage – Chairman

9/14/10
Date


Michael E. Putnam, Vice-Chairman

9/14/10
Date


Dale A. White, Commissioner

9/14/10
Date